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Energy and Technology Committee, CGA

Please amend SB176

Dear Energy and Technology Committee,
Dear chairs, vice chairs and esteemed members,

I am writing to ask for your support and amendment to S.B 176, An Act Concerning Shared Clean Energy Facilities.

As a member of the CT Energy Network and a clean energy advocate in my town, as a CT resident and especially as a mother of three trying to leave a liveable world and affordable clean energy for my kids, I ask that you raise or better delete the caps on solar installations. At the very least, please raise

- The cap on commercial solar to 100 MW
- The cap on shared clean energy facilities to 50MW

-or even better, just eliminate the caps. Who benefits from them?

Project owners do not benefit from caps: Commercial and Shared Clean Energy projects have a fixed planning and installation cost, it is a waste of money to not use those costs for the maximum return on investment.

Neither “the grid” nor low income communities, or rate payers in general, benefit from caps either. It is often said that “the grid” can’t handle the excess energy from small (not utility size) projects, or that it would cost too much. Both of which are not true:

- “The grid”, which CT desperately needs to update anyways, would actually benefit from DER: local solar and storage could smooth energy demand (shave off the peak demand), shape demand (reduce up to 80% of operating cost in the long term by e.g. decreasing transmission and distribution cost, as well as peak demand), bring energy generation closer to us the customers and make it much more flexible. Overall, “the grid” and we the rate payers would benefit (- but we might need to update the utility rate system to a performance based model instead of an investment based model)
- As I’ve learned in a webinar today (People’s Alliance for Clean Energy, recording to be posted on their website soon), investment in local solar and storage would specifically benefit low income communities. Families who carry the highest energy cost burden, and who often can not afford (or get permission from landlords) for rooftop solar on their own, could buy shares and lower their energy costs tremendously - IF THE CAPS ARE RAISED OR ELIMINATED.

I strongly encourage you to take a look at the following resources and see that, in order to meet our emission reduction goals and clean energy goals, we need *both* utility scale *and* small scale renewables

and storage - and for the small scale projects to work, please raise or eliminate the caps currently proposed.

Resources:

White paper press release on integrating DERs for a modern grid, 2/16/2022

<https://www.localsolarforall.org/news/new-white-paper-promotes-strategies-to-modernize-electric-grid-through-integrating-distributed-energy-resources-der-at-scale>

Report on "Integrating Distributed Solar and Storage: the Keystones of a Modern Grid", 02/2022

https://www.communitysolaraccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/CCSA_BRO-White-Paper_20220214.pdf

"Why Local Solar For All Costs Less: A new Roadmap for the Lowest Cost Grid", 12/1/2020

https://www.vibrantcleanenergy.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/WhyDERs_ES_Final.pdf

Volts podcast "Rooftop Solar and Home Batteries Make a Clean Grid Vastly More Affordable", 5/28/2021

<https://www.volts.wtf/p/rooftop-solar-and-home-batteries?s=r>

PACE webinar "Why locals solar for all costs less", 3/7/2022

(soon to be posted on <https://pacecleanenergy.org/videos-events/>)

Integrating DERs is the most cost effective - and probably the only viable - way to reach our clean energy and emission reduction goals. CT has great goals, now please help us to get there - by raising or eliminating caps on rooftop solar in SB176.

Thank you for your consideration,

A. Koepfer